

Milestones That Matter: Understanding Development To Foster Faith And Disciple The Next Generation At Every Stage

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Stage	Age Range	Physical & Cognitive Milestones	Age-Appropriate Teaching Strategies	Spiritual Growth: Know • Worship • Serve	Ministry Implementation
Puggles	2-3 years	<p>Rapid growth in motor skills</p> <p>Short attention span</p> <p>Concrete thinkers</p> <p>Language exploding</p>	<p>Children of this age learn best through play, singing, role-play, and repetition.</p> <p>Children need single-instruction direction.</p> <p><u>Total Time Teaching:</u> every aspect of the night should point toward the Bible point of the lesson.</p> <p>Arts and crafts should be process-oriented.</p> <p>Game Time is play time!</p>	<p>Bible study: Simple truths</p> <p><u>Puggles Precepts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God Made all Things • God Saw that it was Good • God is Love • Give Thanks <p><u>Cubbies:</u></p> <p>God loved us and sent His Son</p> <p>Worship:</p> <p>Singing with motions, clapping, and simple prayers.</p> <p>Service:</p> <p>Showing respect to parents and teachers and demonstrating kindness to others (caring, sharing, being gentle).</p>	
Cubbies	3-5 years		<p><u>Puggles:</u></p> <p>* Independent play with thematic toys.</p> <p><u>Cubbies:</u></p> <p>*Imaginative, non-competitive play.</p>		

Sparks	K–2nd grade	<p>Learning to read.</p> <p>Eager to learn and memorize facts.</p> <p>Concrete logical thinkers.</p> <p>Growing ability to sit and focus for 10–15 minutes.</p>	<p>Children in this age group benefit from visuals, storytelling, sequencing, and singing songs. They are able to recognize themes.</p> <p>These clubbers are motivated by games and meeting challenges.</p> <p>Students in this age group are beginning to read the Bible on their own.</p> <p>They benefit from encouragement and repetition.</p>	<p>Bible study:</p> <p>Reading simple verses.</p> <p>Memorizing short passages and building to larger memory passages through repetition.</p> <p>Worship:</p> <p>Active singing as worship.</p> <p>Giving praise through prayer.</p> <p>Service:</p> <p>Praying for and over others.</p> <p>Acts of kindness (encouraging others, making friends, giving, and helping others).</p>	
T&T	3rd–6th grade	<p>These students demonstrate increased reading comprehension.</p> <p>Abstract thought is emerging in these upper elementary grades.</p> <p>These clubbers are growing in independence and social awareness.</p> <p>Students are forming lifelong belief systems.</p>	<p>Students learn best through interactive learning.</p> <p>Small groups move from teacher-led instruction to guided conversations.</p> <p>Teaching the context of spiritual truths becomes critical.</p> <p>Students enjoy team challenges.</p> <p>Students are motivated by fun.</p>	<p>Bible study: Clubbers are able to read and understand longer passages, applying lessons to real life.</p> <p>Worship: Students are beginning to develop personal devotional habits.</p> <p>Prayer and singing become personal adoration.</p> <p>Service: T&T clubbers can serve in the church and write notes of encouragement to missionaries. and earn money for offerings.</p>	

Trek	Middle School	Middle school students are experiencing rapid physical changes, strong peer influence, begin questioning authority to better understand their world, and are developing reasoning skills.	Middle school students learn best through honest dialogue, open Q&A, real-life application, small group discussion, and space for questions.	<p>Bible study: Middle and high school students should be introduced to study tools (concordances and Bible apps), explore context, and wrestle with hard questions. They should also participate in independent study and explore inductive Bible study methods.</p> <p>Worship: Personal and corporate expression, journaling prayers, leading music or prayer, giving financially, and living a life of worship.</p> <p>Service: Serving and leading in ministry teams, participating in missions trips, sharing the gospel, and discipling other.</p>	
Journey	High School	High school students demonstrate near-adult reasoning, but lack wisdom gained with experience. They are locking in their identity formation, and planning for the future.	High school students benefit from deeper theological discussions and opportunities to lead within their own small groups.		

Slides: <https://tinyurl.com/MilestonesThatMatter>

Handouts: [MultiplyMinistries.org/amcresources](https://www.multiplyministries.org/amcresources)